

Why the Manger Instead of a Mansion

Luke 2:1-20

A. Introduction

1. The nativity story fills us with a deep sense of wonder.
2. Awe surrounds every character in the story.
 - a. In the promises made to Mary & Joseph.
 - b. With the shepherds when angels appeared to them.
 - c. Throughout Bethlehem, as the shepherds shared what they had seen and heard
3. The story reminds us that God was working His purposes through miracles.

B. It Was Truly A Night of Miracles

1. The entire occasion of the census itself was a miracle, orchestrated by God.
2. The Roman Empire, unaware of God's plan, was moved to accomplish His will.
3. Mary & Joseph were brought to Bethlehem, exactly as God had promised.
4. This journey fulfilled prophecy (Micah 5:2).
5. The timing of Jesus' birth was also a miracle, God's perfect timing (Gal 4:4–5).
6. The incarnation itself was the greatest miracle of all (John 1:14).
7. Yet, after all these miracles, God allowed His Son to be born in a stable.
8. Jesus was laid in a manger—not a mansion.
9. What was the significance of the manger in the nativity story?
10. The manger emphasizes humility and simplicity.
11. It shows God reaching down to the lowest and most ordinary places.
12. Earthly kings are born in palaces; heaven's King was born among animals.
13. The manger reflects Christ's rejection by society's elite.
14. The manger was a sign to the shepherds (Luke 2:12)
15. God's plans and promises were all coming together at this moment.
16. The birth in Bethlehem fulfilling ancient prophecies.
17. There was no room for Jesus in the inn.
 - a. There was room for *business* in the inn
 - b. There was room for *pleasure* in the inn
 - c. There was room for *others* in the inn
18. John captures this tragic reality (John 1:10–11):
19. *"The world did not recognize him... his own did not receive him."*
20. John reminds us who Jesus truly is: (John 1:1–14)
 - a. The Word was God (v.1)
 - b. The Word was the Creator (v.3)
 - c. The world was made through Him (v.10)
 - d. Yet the world rejected Him (vv.10–11)
 - e. The Word became flesh (v.14)
21. The world still rejects Him today.
22. The question remains: Will you receive Him?

C. The Manger Perfectly Pictures His Redemption

1. The angels gave the shepherds two signs:
 - a. A baby wrapped in swaddling clothes
 - b. Lying in a manger (the Lamb of God)
2. The manger—a feeding trough—symbolizes nourishment and life.
3. Jesus would later declare, “*I am the bread of life*” (John 6:35).
4. True spiritual nourishment and satisfaction are found only in Christ.
5. John the Baptist identified Him as “*the Lamb of God*” (John 1:29).
6. It was not far from the manger to the cross.
7. Christmas should never be separated from the cross.
8. Paul ties Christ’s birth directly to His redeeming mission:
 - a. Born to redeem those under the law Gal. 4:4-5:
 - b. He humbled Himself, obedient even to death on a cross (Philippians 2:8)
9. The Lamb first seen in the manger is the same Lamb worshiped in Revelation:
 - a. Worthy because He was slain (Revelation 5)
 - b. Salvation belongs to the Lamb (Revelation 7)
 - c. Victorious King of kings (Revelation 17)
 - d. Celebrated at the wedding of the Lamb (Revelation 19)

D. The Manger Perfectly Pictures His Reachability

1. The first announcement of Jesus’ birth was given to humble shepherds.
2. This reveals that Jesus is accessible to all people.
3. The manger was open to shepherds and later to wise men.
4. God’s invitation extends to everyone, regardless of status or background.
5. Jesus came for both the rich and the poor.
6. We must be careful not to complicate or restrict the gospel.
7. He chose a manger instead of a mansion.
8. “*Whoever comes to me I will never drive away*” (John 6:37).
9. God often reveals Himself in humble and unexpected places.
10. He meets us where we are.
11. This is the heart of the gospel message (John 3:16).
12. What does the birth of Christ mean to you personally?

E. Conclusion

1. What does the manger teach us today?
2. Just as Jesus embraced humility, we are called to do the same.
3. Christ’s humble beginning helps us deepen our appreciation of God’s grace.
4. The manger reminds us that God’s presence is often found in unexpected places.
5. This helps us gain a deeper appreciation for God’s plans & purpose for our lives.
6. Do you have room for Jesus?